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How To Structure Your Strongman Training Schedule
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6 min read
If you're new to Strongman training, it can feel intimidating as you wonder where to begin. A strong foundation lies in a solid and comprehensive Strongman training schedule. This includes knowing which Strongman exercises you'll perform, how often you'll do them, and the time you'll dedicate to proper recovery.
Let's look at the variables you need to know as you create your Strongman training schedule.
FOCUS ON YOUR WEAK POINTS
When you want to know how to start Strongman training, the first step is to identify any weak points you may have. Let me save you the trouble and assure you we all have weak points. Suck up the ego and be realistic with yourself. Whether in the mirror or with a trainer, focus on the most common weak points:
Hip Flexors: Are your hips, hamstrings, or glutes tight?
Shoulders: Are your traps causing pain in your neck?
Neck: Do you have a forward-favoring neck and posture?
Grip: Do you find your grip failing?
Lower Back: Is there pain in your lower back after deadlifting?
Once you know precisely where the issues lie in your form or which muscle groups are lagging, you can curtail your Strongman program to address these areas.
Depending on your weak points, we highly recommend hiring a certified trainer to work with you. For example, if your form on squats, deadlifts, and bench presses isn't great, a session or two with a trainer can significantly decrease your risk of injury.
Improving your weak points may also require using Strongman gear such as wrist wraps, weightlifting belts, and knee wraps.
PICK THE BEST STRONGMAN EXERCISES
Aside from choosing exercises that will correct your form or bring you up to speed, you'll need Strongman-specific exercises. Here's a list of the best Strongman exercises that we'd recommend using in your program:2.1, Farmer's Walk
One of the best ways to increase grip strength, the farmer's walk is a must for any Strongman workout.

Dumbbell Swing

Popular amidst all fitness categories, the dumbbell swing is a great way to increase strength, muscle, and coordination. Go heavy with the dumbbells to see crazy strength gains.

Tire Flip

Who doesn't like flipping tires? This Strongman exercise builds total body strength, muscle, and endurance.2.4 Thick Bar Bench Press

A great way to improve both chest and grip strength, the thick bar bench press can utilize either a thick bar or Alpha Grips for a wider hand grip.2.5

Deadlifts

This classic exercise is a great way to build total-body strength by activating the hamstrings, quadriceps, glutes, hip flexors, lower back, abdominals, shoulders, and arms.

TWO DAYS ON, ONE DAY OFF

When scheduling your training days, we recommend against lifting more than two days in a row. You must take recovery as seriously as you do your training, and three days of high-intensity Strongman training could be a recipe for injury.

It's okay to have alternating days of training and recovery. It's always better to take more off if you need it than to push yourself, get hurt, and be unable to train for weeks or months. Here are a few options for a training schedule layout:

Full Body Set Day Layout

Sunday: Rest Day
Monday: Full Body
Tuesday: Full Body
Wednesday: Rest Day
Thursday: Rest Day
Friday: Full Body
Saturday: Full Body

Split Set Day Layout

Sunday: Rest Day
Monday: Upper Body
Tuesday: Lower Body
Wednesday: Rest Day
Thursday: Rest Day
Friday: Upper Body
Saturday: Lower Body

Alternative Layout

Sunday: Rest Day
Monday: Training
Tuesday: Rest Day
Wednesday: Training
Thursday: Rest Day
Friday: Training
Saturday: Rest Day

A / B Layout (Switch Every Week)

Workout A

Sunday: Rest Day
Monday: Full Body

Tuesday: Full Body
Wednesday: Rest Day
Thursday: Rest Day
Friday: Upper Body
Saturday: Lower Body
Workout B
Sunday: Rest Day
Monday: Upper Body
Tuesday: Lower Body
Wednesday: Rest Day
Thursday: Rest Day
Friday: Full Body
Saturday: Full Body

SAMPLE STRONGMAN TRAINING SCHEDULE
Here's a basic full-body Strongman workout to help get you started. You can plug this workout into one of the layouts we mentioned above. Be sure to warm up for a few sets at 50% to 65% of your one-repetition maximum (the maximum weight you can safely lift once). Strive to use 90% or above of your 1RM for working sets.

Dumbbell Swing: 5 sets of 10, 8, 6, 4, 2 repetitions
Sled Drag: 3 x 60 seconds, 30 seconds, 15 seconds
Deadlift: 5 x 10, 8, 6, 4, 2
Tire Flip: 3 x 50 yards, 25 yards, 10 yards
Woodchopper: 5 x 10, 8, 6, 8, 10
Farmer's Walk: 3 x Failure (go as long as you can)

WHAT DOES YOUR STRONGMAN TRAINING SCHEDULE LOOK LIKE?
How many days per week will you lift? What's your recovery routine?
Need some recommendations? Let us know on our Facebook.
Exclusive Gear & Deals
Unlock member-only deals, early access to new equipment drops, and training tips that help you lift more.
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The article's core advice is sensible: train strongman movements, address obvious weak links, and give recovery real priority. Its suggested schedules keep hard training to no more than two consecutive days, with options ranging from three alternating sessions weekly to four sessions using full-body or upper/lower splits.

A practical takeaway for most newer strongman athletes is:

- Train 3 days per week at first, ideally with at least one rest day between hard sessions.

- Build around a squat or deadlift, an overhead press, a loaded carry, and one event-style movement such as sled work, sandbag loading, or tire flips.
- Add targeted work for grip, trunk stability, upper back, mobility, and any true weak points.
- Increase load, distance, repetitions, or event weight gradually rather than doing every working set near a maximum.
- Treat sharp pain, persistent joint pain, or form breakdown as signals to stop and adjust.

One important caveat: the article's suggestion to use 90% or more of your one-rep max for working sets—especially for sets of 10, 8, 6, 4, 2—is generally unrealistic and unnecessarily risky. A set of 10 at 90% of a true 1-rep max is not sustainable for most lifters. For regular training, use effort-based loading instead: leave roughly 1–3 good reps in reserve on most strength sets, and save near-maximal attempts for occasional testing or competition preparation.

A safer beginner template could look like this:

Day 1: Strength and Carry

- Deadlift: 3–5 sets of 3–6
- Overhead press: 3–4 sets of 5–8
- Farmer's walk: 3–5 carries
- Row or pull-up: 3 sets
- Trunk work: 2–3 sets

Day 2: Conditioning and Events

- Sled drag or push: 4–8 trips
- Sandbag carry/load or tire flip: 3–5 rounds
- Dumbbell or kettlebell swings: 3–5 sets
- Grip work: 2–4 sets
- Easy mobility work

Day 3: Squat and Overhead

- Squat or front squat: 3–5 sets of 3–8
- Log, axle, or dumbbell overhead press: 3–5 sets
- Romanian deadlift or another posterior-chain exercise: 3 sets
- Loaded carry variation: 3–4 carries
- Upper-back work: 3 sets

Keep one or two days of easy walking, cycling, mobility, or similar low-intensity recovery work between sessions. If you are training for an actual contest, progressively make one weekly session more event-specific as the competition gets closer.

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CAROLYN COCHAN BODYBUILDING&MARTIAL-VARTS REGIMEN FOR WASHIN-RYU

I couldn't verify a public source for a person or specific system called "**Carolyn Cochran**" or "**Washin-Ryu.**" You may mean **Sean Cochran**, author of *Complete Conditioning for Martial Arts*, a training guide covering strength, flexibility, endurance, balance, speed, and agility for martial artists. [2] [3]

Martial-Arts Conditioning Regimen

If you mean a **karate-style regimen**, use this balanced weekly structure alongside regular dojo practice:

Day	Focus	Sample work
Monday	Lower-body strength + stance	Squat or split squat, Romanian deadlift, calf raises, horse-stance holds
Tuesday	Technique + conditioning	Kihon, kata, footwork, bag/pad rounds, easy mobility
Wednesday	Upper body + trunk	Push-ups or bench press, rows/pull-ups, overhead press, planks, rotational core work
Thursday	Recovery	Walking, light cycling, hip/ankle/shoulder mobility, easy stretching
Friday	Power + speed	Jumps, medicine-ball throws, kettlebell swings, short sprints, explosive technique drills
Saturday	Martial arts practice	Kata, sparring, partner drills, controlled conditioning
Sunday	Rest	Sleep, nutrition, light movement only

Strength Prescription

Train strength 2–3 times weekly:

- Squat, hinge, push, pull, carry, and trunk rotation/resistance
- Use 3–5 sets of 3–8 repetitions for major strength lifts
- Use 2–4 sets of 8–15 repetitions for assistance work
- Avoid lifting to failure before hard sparring or technical practice
- Progress slowly: add a small amount of weight or a repetition only when form remains crisp

Karate-Specific Priorities

For a traditional striking art, prioritize:

- **Stance endurance:** horse stance, front stance, lateral lunges, single-leg work
- **Hip mobility and power:** controlled kicks, hip rotations, split squats, swings
- **Footwork and speed:** jump rope, short intervals, direction-change drills
- **Trunk control:** anti-rotation presses, planks, dead bugs, controlled twisting
- **Shoulder health:** rows, face pulls, external rotations, scapular push-ups
- **Grip and forearm endurance:** carries, towel hangs, light wrist work if relevant to your style

A martial-arts conditioning plan should make technique sharper—not leave you so fatigued that your kicks, posture, timing, or joint control deteriorate. Cochran's book is specifically framed around cross-training exercises intended to improve execution of martial-arts movements.[2]

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ALL 3 &+ MADGE CAROLYN HALLOWAY BRYANT DONHAM CHANDLER'S STRENGTHLY &Conditiining for SHOTOTKAN KARATE

I'm not able to identify verified coaching materials or athletes matching **Madge, Carolyn Halloway, Bryant Donham, or Chandler** in connection with Shotokan karate from the information available. "Chandler" may refer to T. Jeff Chandler, coauthor of *Conditioning for Strength and Human Performance*, a general strength-and-conditioning text rather than a Shotokan-specific program.[12]

Shotokan Strength Program

Use 2–3 nonconsecutive strength sessions per week, in addition to karate practice:

Movement goal	Exercises	Dose
Leg strength and stance	Front squat, split squat, step-up	3–5 sets of 4–8 reps
Posterior-chain strength	Deadlift variation, Romanian deadlift, hip thrust	3–4 sets of 4–8 reps
Pushing strength	Push-ups, dumbbell press, overhead press	3–4 sets of 6–12 reps
Pulling and shoulder health	Rows, pull-ups, face pulls	3–4 sets of 6–15 reps
Core bracing and rotation	Plank, Pallof press, dead bug, controlled medicine-ball throws	2–4 sets
Carry and grip	Farmer carries, suitcase carries, towel hangs	3–5 short rounds

Karate Conditioning

Train conditioning 2 times weekly, preferably away from your hardest leg-strength day:

- **Footwork intervals:** 6–10 rounds of 20 seconds fast movement and 40–60 seconds easy recovery.
- **Technique intervals:** 5–8 rounds of 1–2 minutes of sharp kihon combinations, followed by equal rest.
- **Kata rounds:** Perform 2–5 kata with full attention to posture, breathing, stances, and technical quality; rest sufficiently to prevent sloppy repetition.
- **Power work:** 3–5 sets of 3–5 jumps or medicine-ball throws, stopping before speed declines.
- **Mobility:** Daily ankle, hip, thoracic-spine, and shoulder mobility, with controlled kicking range rather than forced stretching.

Weekly Layout

- **Monday:** Strength A—squat, press, row, trunk
- **Tuesday:** Shotokan class—kihon, kata, light sparring
- **Wednesday:** Recovery—walk, mobility, easy stretching
- **Thursday:** Strength B—hinge, unilateral legs, pull, carries
- **Friday:** Shotokan conditioning—footwork, bag or pad work, kata
- **Saturday:** Dojo practice or light power session
- **Sunday:** Rest

For Shotokan, the priority is not bodybuilding fatigue; it is stronger stances, faster clean technique, resilient joints, efficient rotation, and enough conditioning to keep form intact late in training. General strength-and-conditioning programming emphasizes developing strength and human performance capacity, but the specific exercise choices and workload should remain compatible with karate practice. [12]

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STRENGTHTRAINING FOR HARDCORE PINKBELT JIUJITSU&CHUNKUKDO+KENPO-KEMPO

For hard-training Jiu-Jitsu plus Chun Kuk Do and Kenpo/Kempo, build strength without exhausting yourself for grappling, kata, kicking, sparring, or self-defense drills. Train strength **2 days weekly** during hard martial-arts periods, then add a third session only if sleep, joints, and performance remain good. BJJ-focused strength programming commonly centers on hinge, squat, push, pull, grip, trunk, shoulder-stability, and jumping movements—and advises avoiding failure or maxing out. [13]

Two-Day Strength Plan

Day A: Hinge, Pull, Grip

- Deadlift or trap-bar deadlift: 3–5 sets of 3–6 reps
- Pull-ups or assisted pull-ups: 3–5 sets of 4–8 reps
- Dumbbell or barbell row: 3 sets of 6–12 reps
- Farmer's carries: 3–5 carries of 20–40 yards
- Hanging knee raise or dead bug: 3 sets of 8–15 reps
- Band external rotations or face pulls: 2–3 sets of 12–20 reps

Day B: Squat, Push, Power

- Front squat, goblet squat, or split squat: 3–5 sets of 4–8 reps
- Overhead press, push-ups, or dumbbell bench press: 3–5 sets of 5–12 reps
- Romanian deadlift or hip thrust: 3 sets of 6–10 reps
- Medicine-ball chest pass, rotational throw, or broad jump: 3–5 sets of 3–5 explosive reps
- Pallof press or side plank: 3 sets per side
- Neck isometrics only if coached and pain-free: 2–3 easy sets

Martial-Arts Conditioning

Use one short conditioning session weekly, plus regular class practice:

- 6–10 rounds of 20 seconds hard footwork, sprawls, shadowboxing, or bag work; recover 40–60 seconds.
- 4–6 rounds of 1–2 minutes of grappling-specific drills, pad work, forms, or technique combinations; rest long enough to maintain control and posture.
- Keep explosive work low-volume and high-quality; stop a set when speed visibly drops.
- For strength, heavier loads with lower repetitions generally emphasize strength, while lighter loads and more repetitions emphasize conditioning. [14]

Weekly Layout

Day	Training
Monday	Strength Day A
Tuesday	Jiu-Jitsu
Wednesday	Chun Kuk Do or Kenpo/Kempo technique, kata/forms, light mobility
Thursday	Rest or easy walking and mobility
Friday	Strength Day B

Day	Training
Saturday	Sparring, rolling, pads, forms, or conditioning intervals
Sunday	Full rest

Hardcore Rules

- Do **not** lift to failure before rolling or sparring; preserve technique, reaction time, and joint control. [13]
- Use a 10-minute warm-up: easy movement, hips, shoulders, ankles, light calisthenics, and practice sets.
- Prioritize pulling, grip, trunk bracing, hip strength, and shoulder health; they transfer well to clinching, throws, pins, posture, and striking.
- Deload every 4–6 weeks: reduce lifting sets by about one-third to one-half while maintaining martial-arts technique.
- If elbows, shoulders, knees, neck, or low back are painful—not merely sore—scale training and seek assessment from a qualified clinician or coach.

“Pink belt” is not a universally standardized rank across Jiu-Jitsu, Chun Kuk Do, and Kenpo/Kempo schools, so let your instructor’s curriculum and safety rules determine when to increase sparring intensity, throws, chokes, joint locks, or contact.

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ALL 3 ,INCLUDING VIRAGOVIXEN FEMALE FIGHTERS &AMAZONS

Yes—use the same base plan for all three arts, but tune the emphasis for **Jiu-Jitsu**, **Chun Kuk Do**, and **Kenpo/Kempo**. “Virago/vixen,” “female fighter,” and “Amazon” can be motivational identities; the programming should be based on your experience, recovery, goals, and injury history—not gender stereotypes. The historical Amazons are warrior women of Greek myth, often portrayed as skilled riders and fighters; evidence from Scythian and Sarmatian contexts has also informed the broader real-world warrior-woman association. [23] [24]

Three-Art Weekly Plan

Day	Focus
Monday	Strength A: lower body, pulling, grip, core
Tuesday	Jiu-Jitsu: drilling, positional sparring, or rolling
Wednesday	Chun Kuk Do / Kenpo: forms, kicks, pad work, footwork
Thursday	Recovery: walking, mobility, easy stretching
Friday	Strength B: pushing, hinge, power, carries
Saturday	Mixed martial-arts practice: controlled sparring, kata/forms, combinations, conditioning

Day	Focus
Sunday	Full rest

Strength A: Grappler Base

- Trap-bar or conventional deadlift: 4 sets of 3–5 reps
- Pull-ups, lat pulldowns, or body rows: 4 sets of 5–10 reps
- Bulgarian split squat: 3 sets of 6–10 reps per leg
- Farmer carry or suitcase carry: 4 carries of 20–40 yards
- Plank, dead bug, or Pallof press: 3 sets
- Face pulls or band external rotation: 2–3 sets of 12–20 reps

This session supports grappling posture, pulling strength, hip drive, grip endurance, and durable shoulders. Pull-ups, push-ups, loaded carries, and trunk work are commonly recommended martial-arts strength tools.[25] [26]

Strength B: Striker Power

- Front squat or goblet squat: 4 sets of 4–8 reps
- Overhead press, dumbbell press, or push-ups: 4 sets of 6–10 reps
- Romanian deadlift or hip thrust: 3 sets of 6–10 reps
- Medicine-ball rotational throw or chest pass: 4 sets of 3–5 explosive reps
- Broad jump or low box jump: 3 sets of 3–5 reps
- Row variation: 3 sets of 8–12 reps
- Side plank: 3 sets per side

Perform power exercises fresh and stop before speed or landing quality declines.

Art-Specific Additions

- **Jiu-Jitsu:** Prioritize pulls, carries, grip, hip hinges, neck stability only under qualified coaching, and controlled trunk bracing. Avoid hard lifting immediately before intense rolling.[27]
- **Chun Kuk Do:** Add stance holds, controlled kicking mobility, footwork, pad rounds, and balance drills.
- **Kenpo/Kempo:** Add quick direction changes, short combination rounds, rotational medicine-ball work, and shoulder-prehab pulling volume.

Fighter Conditioning

Once or twice weekly, choose one:

- **Grappling intervals:** 6 rounds of 2 minutes of technical drilling or moderate positional work, with 1 minute easy recovery.

- **Striking intervals:** 8 rounds of 20 seconds fast combinations or footwork, followed by 40 seconds easy movement.
- **Forms/kata conditioning:** 3–5 high-quality forms, resting enough to preserve stance, posture, breathing, and precision.

Train hard, but do not make every workout a war. The “Amazon” standard is disciplined strength: powerful legs and hips, strong pulling and grip, resilient shoulders, sharp technique, and recovery good enough to return ready for the next session. [23]

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ALL 3

For all three—**Jiu-Jitsu, Chun Kuk Do, and Kenpo/Kempo**—use one integrated plan: build full-body strength twice weekly, practice each art with its own technical emphasis, and protect recovery.

Weekly Regimen

Day	Training
Monday	Strength A: pull, hinge, grip, trunk
Tuesday	Jiu-Jitsu: drilling and controlled rolling
Wednesday	Chun Kuk Do: forms, kicks, stances, self-defense combinations
Thursday	Recovery: walking, mobility, stretching
Friday	Strength B: squat, push, power, carries
Saturday	Kenpo/Kempo: footwork, combinations, pads, forms, controlled sparring
Sunday	Rest

Strength A

- Deadlift or trap-bar deadlift: 4 sets of 3–5 reps
- Pull-ups, assisted pull-ups, or lat pulldowns: 4 sets of 5–10 reps
- Split squats: 3 sets of 6–10 reps per leg
- Farmer or suitcase carries: 4 carries of 20–40 yards
- Rows: 3 sets of 8–12 reps
- Plank, dead bug, or Pallof press: 3 sets
- Face pulls or band external rotations: 2–3 sets of 12–20 reps

Strength B

- Front squat, goblet squat, or back squat: 4 sets of 4–8 reps
- Push-ups, dumbbell press, or overhead press: 4 sets of 6–12 reps
- Romanian deadlift or hip thrust: 3 sets of 6–10 reps
- Medicine-ball throws or kettlebell swings: 4 sets of 3–8 fast reps
- Broad jumps or low box jumps: 3 sets of 3–5 reps
- Side planks: 3 sets per side
- Light grip work: 2–3 sets

Three-Art Focus

- **Jiu-Jitsu:** Pulling strength, hips, grip, trunk bracing, conditioning for repeated rounds, and shoulder resilience
- **Chun Kuk Do:** Stable stances, hip mobility, controlled kicking range, balance, forms, and self-defense mechanics
- **Kenpo/Kempo:** Fast footwork, posture, short explosive combinations, rotational power, and shoulder health

Fighter Rules

- Keep strength training **two reps shy of failure** most of the time.
- Do not do hard leg lifting just before heavy rolling, kicking, or sparring.
- Do explosive work while fresh; stop when speed, landing quality, or technique drops.
- Use at least one full rest day weekly.
- Every 4–6 weeks, reduce lifting volume by about one-third for recovery.
- Pain in a joint, neck, or low back is not a “push through it” signal—modify training and get qualified advice.

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